Caroline B. Hall

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April Snow.

What think you of this, little buds,
Just roused from a long, quiet sleep,
And lured by the treacherous south wind
From warm winter wrappings to peep?

What think you these white feathers are,
Dropped down from the north wind's bleak wing,
And falling so cold on your hearts
Just opened to greet the glad spring?

Ah, on many a bud falls the snow!
The snow with its weight chill and white,
And on hearts but just opened to love
Drops sadly its hush and its blight!

What think you of this, little birds,
Just home from the sunnier clime;
As you shake off the merry white flakes
Do you chide the deceitful springtime?

Ah, no! through the white, muffled air
Comes trilling a robin's glad song!
He mocks at the light April snow,
And looks for the sunshine ere long.

So many a brave, cheery heart
Sings sweetly while stormy winds blow,
And waits for the time when its griefs
Shall vanish like soft April snow!

Some Little Folks.

There are some little folks that we never can please;
They fret about trifles; they trouble and tease;
Full of discontent even at play;
Till their friends are worn out, and are heartily glad
When bed-time is coming, and each cross lass or lad
Is quiet and out of the way.

There are some little folks so good-tempered and sweet,
That to see their bright faces is always a treat;
And their friends can quite trust them, they know;
They amuse themselves nicely with some plan or play;
Take care not to worry, or get in the way;
And are welcome wherever they go.

For the Myrtle.

Seeds.

Have you ever noticed how many kinds of seeds are supplied with the means of sowing themselves? Some are feathery and float away upon the slightest breeze, while others might be said to have wings.

I hold in my hand a brown, compact ball of seeds. Can you tell me what tree produces such balls? It is the button-wood tree. The heavier part of the seeds form the outside of the ball, while the centre is made up of the feathery portion. These balls are connected te the tree by a slender stem several inches in length, and sometimes remain there several months. At length, parted from it by wind or other causes, it falls to the ground; there the action of the sun and rain helps to separate the seeds, the wind scatters them over the ground, and thus they are sown without the aid of human hands.

In a similar manner many other seeds are sown. The seeds of the elm, ash, and maple have wings. The seeds of the pine and fir are placed within cones; when the cones open, the wafer-like seeds float away upon the breeze and perchance land in some spot where they may take root and grow. I have seen in a pasture remote from other pines, a family of those trees growing. A chance seed had landed there, taken root and grown, until it had in turn scat-

tered seeds around itself, and there it stood, the patriarch of the group.

Squirrels are active agents in sowing seeds. The nuts or acorns hidden away against a time of need may by some chance be left to sprout, and in time become wide spreading trees.

Birds are instrumental in sowing the seeds of the smaller fruits which they have devoured. I have seen a currant bush growing in the midst of a flourishing elm tree, thirty feet from the ground. Grape and blackberry vines spring up and flourish, deep in the wildwood where no hand scattered the seed.

Among plants how many are happily supplied with the means of sowing themselves. For example the thistle and dandelion. What school girl has not tried blowing away the seeds of the latter to see if wanted by her mother? The seed vessels of some plants burst with a noise and scatter the seeds around. Others burst at a touch, like the balsams or touch-me-nots. The seeds of mosses and fungi are so fine, that they are carried up into the air, along with the evaporation, and floated, perhaps, to some barren spot, there to be the first beginning of vegetation.

When a forest has been cleared away, and the sunshine let in upon the ground, how quickly a tangled growth of young trees, shrubs and briers will spring up, showing that innumerable seeds have been laying there only waiting for the genial warmth of the sun to call them into life.

How pleasant it is to watch the changing face of nature, and how much we may be taught even by the least of her works. *H. H. D.*

Overcome Evil with Good.

One Saturday morning Lettie sat on the portico steps learning her Sunday School verses. Over and over, to fix it in her memory, she repeated the words, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." Not far from her, Dallas, her brother, was busily engaged in trying to make a kite from a collection before him of pink tissue paper, sticks and strings. His face was very red, and his forehead was drawn into an ugly frown as he impatiently exclaimed:

"Pshaw! what is the matter?"

"I'll tell you what's the matter, Dallas," answered Lettie. "Your paste is too thin, and you have not cut your sticks fine enough."

"What do you know about it? Girls don't fly kites," and Dallas made an ugly face at his sister.

"But I am sure the paste is not right," Lettie said. "I watched mamma making fire screens the other day, and yours is not like what she used. Let mo fix it for you," and coming to his side, she stooped to pick up the paste cup.

But Dallas was thoroughly out of humor — angry with himself for not being skilful enough to make the kite, and angry with his sister for presuming to teach him.

"Oh, yes! You think yourself very smart, don't you?" he spitefully exclaimed, and gave her a push which knocked her over.

When he saw what he had done, he plunged his hands into his pockets, and walked off whistling into the orchard.

Lettie got up, her arm hurt by the fall, and her feelings still more hurt by such rough treatment, and called out after Dallas:

"Oh, you rude, naughty boy; I shall tell mamma how you have acted, and she will keep you in this afternoon."

She looked after him for a moment, and then sat down and began again to learn her verse. As she studied, the words, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," seemed somehow to grow in meaning to her mind. She ceased their repetition and remained quiet for a while, her head resting on her little dimpled hand, and her blue eyes looking very thoughtful. Then she arose from her seat, put away her Bible, picked up the paste cup, and went into the kitchen. There she took some flour out of a firkin, thickened the paste, cooked it awhile on the stove, and then went back to the porch and began to work on the forsaken kite.

Meantime, Dallas walked on through the orchard in a very independent manner, taking no notice of Lettie's words, although he heard them very distinctly. He crossed the meadow, sat down on a stone beside the brook, and tried to amuse himself with throwing pebbles into the water. But he got tired of that, and began to regret that he had been so naughty to his sister. He wished he had let her help him with the kite, for he really wanted one very much. His cousins were coming to spend the afternoon with them, and his mother would keep him in as a punishment for his rude conduct. He felt very uncomfortable. He stayed there a good while thinking about it. He was every moment more convinced that he had behaved badly and foolishly. He walked slowly to the house and on reaching the porch was surprised to see his

sister's curly head bent over her work on the kite. She looked up as he came toward her, with a shy glance, as if she was not sure he would be pleased; then rose and handed Dallas the kite—and *such* a kite! It was covered with the pink, and trimmed with tassels and fringe of white tissue paper, and dotted with gilt stars, which Lettie had fashioned from her paper doll dresses.

"Oh, Lettie!" Dallas exclaimed, "how could you do all that for me, when I was so naughty to you?" and he put his arms around her neck and kissed her.

So Dallas enjoyed his holiday flying his kite with his little cousins, and Lettie learned the blessedness of overcoming evil with good.

For the Myrtle.

Charlie.

Charlie is a bright little boy of eleven years, and a good little boy, only he is rather noisy, and a little roguish sometimes, but that does not spoil him for me. No, Charlie is a great favorite with me. I can see him now with my mind's eye while I sit here writing, down in his little New Hampshire home, with his laughing, deep, dark blue eyes, that look so black in the night time dancing with merriment, and his whole face diffused with smiles.

Charlie has no father living, but a gentle mother to love and care for him, and guide his feet into the paths of honesty, truth, peace and purity, and to instil into his mind the commandments and Golden Rule. Then Charlie has a little blue-eyed, fair-haired sister that loves him very much.

I don't know that I have any particular story to relate about Charlie, but as I sit here thinking I cannot refrain from putting my thoughts on paper.

Charlie's mamma bought a little home in New Hampshire not long ago, and Charlie is her little man. He saws and chops all the wood, and brings it in without being asked, and it is never necessary to tell him to do anything but once.

"But does Charlie never do anything naughty?" I seem to hear some little one inquire.

Certainly, Charlie has his faults and failings like other children, but I think he tries very hard to do just right; and would it not be well for every little boy or girl who reads this to do likewise? *S. F. Page.*

The Smallest Post-Office.

"Now, where do you suppose the smallest post-office is?" asked Uncle Clarence, one evening, as he laid down a magazine he had been reading.

"Away off in Colorado or Montana, or in some of those new sections of the country," answered Lewis.

"There are some pretty small ones there, no doubt, but the one I refer to beats them all for littleness. It is kept in a barrel."

All the children laughed, and practical Jenny remarked, "I should not think there would be much room for the postmaster to turn around."

"It has no postmaster," said Uncle Clarence, "it keeps itself."

Curiosity was now wide awake, to know all about this wonderful post-office.

"It is situated, or rather hung, on the outermost rock of the mountains, overhanging the Straits of Magellan, opposite Terra del Fuego. Every passing ship opens it to place letters in, or to take them out. Every ship undertakes to forward all the letters in it, that it is possible for them to transmit. How many homes have been made bright by these messages left in the barrel post-office! It hangs there by its iron chain, beaten and battered by the winds and storms, but no locked and barred office on land is more secure. It is not in the track of mail robbers."

"How I should like to get a letter from it," said Jenny. "I would put it in my cabinet as a curiosity."

"Would it be the next best thing to have a letter somebody else got through it? If so, I can oblige you. I have one which my cousin Tom dropped in there for me, when he was on a long voyage. It was postmarked across one end, by the captain of the *Gold Hunter*, whose ship brought it on to Boston. It is a pretty good letter, too, and will interest you."

Jenny was delighted with the proposition. for she had a passion for collecting all sorts of curious, out-of-the-way articles, and her cabinet was worth seeing.

Uncle Clarence did not forget his promise, and the letter arrived in due time. and was read with as much interest as if it had been whisked down by the tail of a comet or dropped from the wallet of the man in the moon.—*Schoolday Magazine.*

Lullaby.

SWEET and low, sweet and low,
Wind of the western sea,
Low, low, breathe and blow,
Wind of the western sea;
Over the rolling waters go;
Come from the dying moon, and blow,
Blow him again to me,
While my little one, while my pretty one sleeps.

Sleep and rest, sleep and rest,
Father will come to thee soon;
Rest, rest, on mother's breast,
Father will come to thee soon.
Father will come to his babe in the nest,
Silver sails all out of the west,
Under the silver moon.
Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

For the Myrtle.

My Doll Ferdina.

FERDINANDO was the Christian name, by which I always called him, of a visitor at our house very handsome, but whose hair was so extraordinarily thick and curly, and stood out so in every direction, that I used to wonder how he got his hat on. One day he went with my parents and myself, to visit an old acquaintance of papa's, Mr. Holm, the noted professor of phrenology, who lived in a quaint old house at Highgate, where he had a collection of curious and, to most persons, unpleasant objects, such as human skulls and those of beasts, plaster casts of the same, and brains in round glass vases labelled according to weight.

After a discussion with Mr. Holm on the subject of phrenology, Ferdinando expressed a desire to be informed as to what disposition or characteristics the shape of his head denoted, and asked Mr. Holm to write out a chart or description, so that he might always have it by him, to refer to. Then Mr. Holm suggested his having a cast taken of his head.

"The very thing!" exclaimed Ferdinando. "What is the process?"

"Oh, the simplest in the world," replied Mr. Holm, "First of all you shave off your hair, and then—"

"I—I think that—perhaps—on the whole—" interrupted Ferdinando, looking very blank, "I should hardly decide upon the cast."

Oh! how we laughed at him all the way home! and accused him of vanity in not wanting to part with his precious hair, and objecting to being seen going about with a bald head!

Ferdinando sometimes made me presents of toys, and fancy articles. Once I remember he gave me a "Cabas," or shopping bag, over which I shed tears because I feared that he might think me ungrateful if I should not use it, but as I said to mamma, "How could any one be expected to go through the streets with a bag that looked like a large carpet bag, in proportion to one's size, and that had the brightest of peaches, oranges, apples and currants painted on *both* its velvet sides, so that there was no hiding the gaudiness?" But oh, the doll that Ferdinando gave me!

One evening I was lolling on the sofa wishing that I had a new book to read, or something or somebody to play with, when Ferdinando came in, bearing under his arm a package which, with a mysterious look, he confided to mamma. I had been taught not to be inquisitive about what did not concern me, so of course I took no further notice of the package, but after I had been fidgeting and "oh dear"-ing for some time in a way very tiresome for grown-up persons to endure, I looked across the table where mamma was sitting, and saw that she held in her arms —was it a real live baby, or the very loveliest wax doll I had ever beheld? What a bound I gave from that sofa! What a scream, not to say yell, of delight I uttered! How I seized that doll with a cry of "Oh! I don't know what to do, I am so *dreadfully* happy!" How I laughed and cried with joy, and could not sufficiently thank Ferdinando!

The doll was a perfect model in wax, of the

Princess Royal when a baby. It had blue eyes with that sort of sparkling that real eyes have, and eyelashes of real hair. Each golden hair of its head was rooted there in the wax, its head was slightly turned on one side, its features were the most natural and smiling imaginable, and its neck, shoulders, and arms, were dimpled and creased with fat. Fortunately I had by me some baby clothes belonging to my old dolls, and after dressing her I spent the evening in caressing her and looking out names in the dictionary by which to call her. Lydia reminded me of the lid of a box, Olivia, of olive oil, Camilla, of a camel, Letitia, of lettuce, and Sophia, of a sofa. Adriana was pretty, but then it was the name of my great-grandmother, and I did not want to connect the idea of any one as old as a great-grandmother, with a little baby like my doll. I liked the names Alicia, Claribel, Dora, Felicia, Laura, Isadora, Irene, Ida, Muriel, and Florence, and all the names ending in ine, such as Eveline, Ernestine, Geraldine, besides many others, but out of so many I knew not which to decide upon, and at last left the choice to mamma, who advised a shortening of Ferdinando's name, so we decided on calling her Ferdina.

That night after returning thanks in my prayers for the great happiness that had befallen me, I had Ferdina's little face lying on my pillow awhile, but fearing that in this position I might injure her in some way while asleep, I moved her to the foot of the bed, kissing her and bidding her good-night a dozen times. I lay awake some time, thinking of a christening party for my Ferdina, and who should be her godmother, and wondering whether mamma would give me a tiny comb and brush, and powder box with puff of swan's down, knitted socks, and muffeters, and a cloak and white satin hood, for Ferdina.

Long before dawn I was awakened by a sound that seemed to make my heart stand still, a kind of muffled crash! Had I been restless in my dreams, and caused Ferdina to fall out of bed? I groped about on the bed, under, and around the bed, and found her on the floor. With a choking and painful feeling of suspense, I drew my fingers across her face, and thought that I felt a long wide crack extending from her head to her chin. How drearily, how sadly I waited, with only the faintest hope that the injury might not be as serious as I supposed, for the first glimmering of day; but the light only brought with it the certainty of Ferdina's and my own misfortune. For three days I was quite heart-sick over my baby doll, till mamma put it away out of my sight, and in time I became resigned, and allowed myself in a manner to forget.

Clelia Lega Weeks.

A Touching Incident.

A wealthy lady was invited one Sunday by a friend to visit the chapel of the Five-Point's Mission, and listen to the superior singing of those hundreds of little waifs for whom this charity is doing such a noble work.

On her arrival home she noticed the loss of a valuable sleeve-button, the initials of which were set with diamonds; and immediately ordered her coachman to return with a note to the superintendant, stating her loss, and inclosing a handsome reward to the one who found it.

In the meantime a little girl, one of the day scholars, started for her poor, meager home, and, in the hall near the door, picked up the button; and, as she stood for a moment admiring its sparkling beauty, a notoriously bad boy in the street snatched it from her hand, and ran down an alley.

She at once informed the superintendent, who started in pursuit, and succeeded in obtaining the costly jewel without much trouble, and at once dispatched it to the owner by the servant in waiting. Then, calling the little girl, he said,

"Annie, the lady who lost that button has sent me some money to buy a present for the finder. Now, what will you have?"

"O sir! can I have any thing I want?"

"Any thing in reason, child."

"Then, sir, please get me a pair of button boots!" she exclaimed, clapping her hands with delight.

O children of pride and wealth, how little you know of the ecstatic pleasure that thrilled the heart of that poor, poverty-stricken child at the prospect of having her first, perhaps, childish wish granted!

"You shall have them," said the superintendent, smiling at her joyous enthusiasm; but almost instantly her brown eyes filled with tears as she said, "Please, Mr. B., will you pay mother's rent instead of buying the boots?"

"Since you have shown yourself such a thoughtful and self-denying little girl, you shall have money for both," said the kind superintendent.

Who shall be able to estimate the joy and happiness of that unselfish little heart?

Our Sunday Schools.

THE SOUTH.

— We take from the *Guiding Star* a letter to the editor, about our Sunday Schools in Florida, and other Southern States.

Sister Soule: — The Sunday School of the First Universalist Church of West Florida, was organized in March 1871. For about three years, then, has this humble seminary of the church been in operation. Upon the whole, it may justly be said of it, that it is a progressive school, and that the children comprising it are being trained "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The appointments of the pastor of the First Universaiist Church are the first Sunday in every month, at the meeting house, and the other Sundays at a schoolhouse in "Eureka settlement." On every occasion of these appointments, the Sunday School is held. The order of exercises in the school are: 1. Reading a short lesson from the Bible, by the Principal; 2. Singing; 3. Prayer; 4. Examination of the class on the lesson in the Catechism they are studying, which is, now, 'The Key to the Young Heart; 5. Reading by the whole school, from both the Old and New Testaments; 6. Singing various songs of praise; 7. Benediction. These exercises are succeeded by a brief intermission before the regular services of the church begin. Subordinately to the Holy Scriptures, the school has found great benefit in the use of Bro. A. C. Thomas's admirable compilation, the 'Gospel Liturgy,' 'The Guide to Salvation,' 'The Key to the Young Heart,' and the 'Christian Catechism.'

On several occasion, sermons and addresses have been made to the pupils by the pastor, and on two different occasions, last summer, the school was fervently and feelingly addressed by Rev. Dr. Worthy, formerly pastor of the Baptist Church in Troy, Ala., and Rev. J. C. Burruss, editor of the Universalist *Herald*. Thus are we trying to contribute our mite toward the great cause of the gospel.

There was a Sunday School in Volusia Co., East Florida, but of it this writer has heard nothing for a long time. It is supposed that Brother and Sister J. C. C. Feaster, assisted by others, were conducting this school.

But Sister Julia E. Outlaw bears the palm of activity and zeal in the most important work of the church. In all the commendation this excellent Universalist lady has received on account of her labors of love, — not an *iota* has been in excess of her merits.

Another sister in North Carolina is conducting a Sunday School, very much upon the plan, and with the persevering and philanthropic spirit of sister Outlaw. Kind Heaven, bless these Christian laborers, and those of the *Guiding Star*, the MYRTLE and the *Sunday School Helper*, whose admirable publications are doing such great good in the cause of Sunday Schools.

Truly and fraternally, *L. C. G.*

— Among the Union Sunday Schools in the South, ought to be mentioned that of Salem Church, Cherokee Co., Georgia, of which Bro. J. A. Rhyne is pastor.

MASSACHUSETTS.

— Rev. E. W. Coffin writes from Orange concerning the Sunday School connected with his society, that it has one hundred and seventy members with an average attendance of one hundred and forty. The average congregation at the church service is two hundred and fifty. What an increase in prosperity we should have if all our Sunday Schools bore this comparison with the congregation!

—Shawmut Avenue Sunday School celebrated its thirty-seventh anniversary with a concert at that church last Sunday evening. Beside the singing by the scholars, there were exercises consisting of prayers, an examination of scholars in the Catechism, and addresses by the pastor, Rev. L. L. Briggs and Mr. George C. Metcalf of East Boston. The superintendent, Mr. Albert Metcalf, presented an informal report, representing the school to be in a good condition, forty per cent. of the school being upward of sixteen years of age.

—Columbus Avenue Sunday School celebrates its anniversary on Easter Sunday. Selections suitable to the occasion, or "Easter offerings" will be given by the classes.

— We hope to give items of the Easter celebration in all our schools next week.

MAINE.

—The pupils of the Oldtown Sunday School will hold a May-day Festival in the Town Hall. That beautiful drama, "The Mission of the Fairies," will be a part of the entertainment,

CONNECTICUT.

—A writer from Hartford to the *Banner* says: "The ladies of the Hartford church gave a very successful entertainment in the church vestry, last Wednesday evening, which gave great satisfaction to the large number who assembled at the rooms. The tables were loaded with the choicest viands, and were well patronized; the fancy tables which looked very attractive at the beginning, were entitely disrobed before the close of the entertainment. But the best of all was the music, and readings by members of the Suuday School. Professional readers hardly do better than some of the young ladies on that occasion. This entertainment was not intended to be a great thing—it was gotten up in haste, and with little labor and no expense, intended only for the pleasure of our own congregation. But it was quite as enjoyable, and more profitable than many larger undertakings."

ILLINOIS.

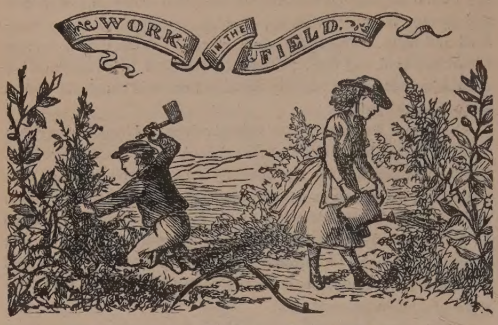
—We infer that the young people of Aurora are trying to buy a piano for their vestry. At least, this is the news we hear from there: "The Young People's Piano Society of the Aurora Parish are doing nobly. They hold entertainments in the vestry of the church once every two weeks, consisting of music, tableaux, charades, recitations, and theatricals. They charge ten cents admission and frequently receive over fifty dollars a night. They work hard for success and are to be warmly commended for their enterprise and good taste."

IOWA.

—A writer in the *Covenant* speaks encouragingly of the Sunday School at Dubuque, under the new pastor, Rev. Mr. Countryman. The Bible class has an average of forty members and the whole school, always a good one, has taken a new lease of life. The superintendent, Bro. M. Kingman, has been in the school for many years.

MONTANA.

— A writer from "Twin Bridges, Madison Co., Montana," sends an order for the "Altar," the "Manual and Harp," "S. S. Melodist," "Foot-prints Heavenward," and other books of our faith. He says: "We have organized a Bible Class in this place; I am chosen as leader. We are without books and I wish to introduce as many of our own denomination as possible Many of the people here are liberal in sentiment and sympathize with our views. What we need in all this section is the right kind of work." Would that all Universalists in these far and waste places, would try as faithfully to plant the seeds of their own blessed faith!



Lives of the Apostles.

LESSON LVI.—PAUL.

Question. — Who came to visit Festus, the new Roman governor?

Answer. — Acts xxv. 13.

Q. — About whom did Festus consult Agrippa?

A. — Acts xxv. 14.

Q. — What was Agrippa willing to do?

A. — Acts xxv. 22.

NOTE. As Agrippa was a descendent of Herod the Great, and had resided in Palestine nearly the whole of his life, he was able to understand the questions between the Jews, better than Festus, and would be able to assist Festus in forming a judgment.

Q. — What kind of a company did Festus gather to listen to St. Paul?

A. — Acts xxv. 23.

NOTE. The whole Jewish nation was greatly agitated by hatred against St. Paul, and the new governor was puzzled in seeking to ascertain the cause of the excitement.

Q. — When Festus addressed the assembly; before Paul commenced to speak, what did he say the Jews demanded of him respecting Paul?

A. — Acts xxv. 24.

Q. — Upon trial, what did Festus find respecting the Apostle?

A. — Acts xxv. 25.

Q. — Paul, having appealed to the emperor of Rome for trial, what had Festus determined to do?

A. — Acts xxv. 25.

Q. — As it was necessary, in sending Paul for trial to the emperor, to state plainly the crime with which he was charged, what trouble did Festus find in sending Paul to Rome for trial?

A. — Acts xxv. 26.

Q. — Why had he brought Paul before Agrippa and the chief men of the government?

A. — Acts xxv. 26.

Q. — What did Festus consider to be a reasonable thing in sending a man away for trial?

A. — Acts xxv. 27.

Hidden Seed

Bible Enigma.

Name the Gittite servant who to David faithful proved.
Name a beauteous woman whom the son of Jesse wooed.
Who went up Pisgah's mountain fair Canaan to view?
In what city of Cilicia was born a noted Jew?
Whose life was lengthened fifteen years because of earnest prayer?
And who was chosen for a queen because of beauty rare?
By whom was Paul instructed according to the law?
Who hid God's prophets in a cave when danger they foresaw?
Up what mountain did King David with the people mourning go?
Who forsook the apostle Paul for this world's empty show?
Who led the noble army of Christian martyrs brave?
Name a title of the Saviour who gave his life to save.
To what certain man of Lydda did Peter health restore?
Where were Paul and Silas when at midnight they praised God?
What wicked woman's daughter danced for John the Baptist's head?
Who by the Lord's command was by the ravens fed?
Whose sons did slay Ish-bosheth, a king of Israel?
When God's ark was brought to Ashdod, what Philistine idol fell?
The initials of these words a precious text will give,—
The name He gave himself, who died that we might live.

Answers.

APRIL 11. No. 1. Pillar of Fire.
No. 2. Magicians.

YOUTH in its ardor, and manhood in glory,
Infancy — life's path as yet all untrod,
Childhood with bounding step, age with locks hoary —
All have a work in the vineyard of God.

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